

Guiding, supporting and inspiring Annual Review 2015 - 16

The **National Alliance for Arts in Criminal justice** aims to ensure that people within the Criminal Justice System get access to arts opportunities as a springboard to positive change. Nearly 800 members support and develop creative interventions for people in prison, on probation and in the community, with impressive results. We support this transformative work by providing a network and a voice for all the talented and creative people who are committed to making great art to change lives. The Alliance remains focused in supporting members to work creatively with offenders, their families and victims of crime.

"Arts organisations have demonstrated their creativity and generosity. They offer hope. They don't give up on people."

"The UK Criminal Justice System has a unique arts alliance promoting access to the arts for people in prisons, on community sentences in remand and immigration removal centres and for those at risk. The Alliance also keeps an internationally respected Evidence Library documenting the impact of its member organisations - a comprehensive record of the transforming power of the arts in turning lives around.

The work is driven by a remarkable steering group and I would like to thank them for guiding, supporting and inspiring the annual programme. This has been an extraordinary year. We benefitted from huge support with the National Theatre hosting an extraordinary event enabling debate and discussion and showcasing a range of theatre, film, poetry and creative writing. Our annual Anne Peaker lecture in 2015 highlighted the reach of UK arts organisations and the network respected and envied across the world. On the policy front we are greatly heartened by Secretary of State for Justice, Michael Gove announcing his intention for wholesale reform of the education system in prisons and recognising the role of the arts. This was followed by a speech from the Prime Minister expressing his determination to address the "scandalous failure" of the prison system and the need to offer "hope and not to give up on people."

So we look forward to the coming year both informing and supporting the new agenda. I would like to thank Clinks, our host organisation, and our main funders, the Monument Trust whose inspiration and vision enables everything we do. I'd also like to thank the Ministry of Justice for their funding and ongoing strategic support, especially via the Arts Forum, which they Chair. I would like to thank everyone at the Alliance. I am especially grateful to Jessica Plant who has returned from maternity leave with huge energy and knowledge to help us take the opportunities afforded by a new cultural strategy, prison and educational reform.

Thanks very much indeed to Chloe Courtney for minding the shop while Jessica was away and a great many plaudits to Tim Robertson who I follow as Chair. He was outstanding, an inspiration to arts organisations working in this field, and will be greatly missed. I follow with trepidation, passion and respect for this formidable national criminal justice arts alliance."



Dr Alison Frater,
Chair of the
National Alliance
for Arts in Criminal
Justice



Jessica Plant
Manager of the
*National Alliance
for Arts in Criminal
Justice*

"I am invigorated by the vibrant community of artists and arts organisations delivering phenomenal work in incredibly challenging environments including prison and community settings. Our members continue to push boundaries and challenge the status quo both in terms of creative output, and approaches to working with people with complex needs. Our members have the unique ability to work with people's assets through positive creative projects enabling marginalised groups to become socially and culturally included. I am delighted to come back to a positive policy drive from government, which welcomes innovative and creative solutions to breaking the re-offending cycle and champions diverse arts.

The Alliance will continue to provide a network and a voice, along with inspiration and a community to support members to create theatre, music, visual arts, dance and film that challenges both individuals who have experienced the Criminal Justice System and new audiences to think, see and feel differently."

Steering Group

We would like to say a huge thank you to the 2015/16 steering group for the hard work and commitment to the Alliance and the work we do. Without them our work could not happen. Our international recognition comes from their knowledge, skills and leading practice in providing quality arts experiences for people within the Criminal Justice System. Therefore we would like to thank:

Andy Watson (Geese Theatre Company), Anna Herrmann (Clean Break), Catherine Hearne (Helix Arts), Esther Baker (Synergy Theatre Company), Jenni Parker (Fine Cell Work), Katy Haigh (Good Vibrations), Nina Champion (Prisoners' Education Trust), Sally Taylor (Koestler Trust), Sara Lee, (Irene Taylor Trust - Music in Prisons), Sarah Colvin (University of Cambridge), Selina Busby (Central School of Speech and Drama), and Zed Ali (Project BME).

As well as our co-opted members: Ginny Scholey (Independent), Kevin Field (Media for Development), Michelle Bynoe (Independent), Nikki Crane (Guy's and St Thomas' Charity), and Russ Haynes (Independent).

Our membership

791 members

as of February 2016, an increase of
14% on last year.

Of our 791 members, 19% work nationwide or in more than one region, and 16% work in London. 2% of our members work in Wales, and 7% outside of England and Wales, including in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

42% of our members work in prisons and 68% work in the community (including probation and Youth Offending Services), and 23% work in arts settings such as museums and galleries.

33% of our members use theatre or drama, with another 33% using creative writing, and 31% utilising the visual arts. Other art forms used by our members include music (22%), film (19%), dance (14%), and craft (13%).

36% of our members work with young people, 31% work with men, and 30% work with women. Our members also work with people with mental health needs (25%), people with disabilities (20%), people with substance misuse issues (19%), and older people (16%).

Our work 2015-16

Research and gathering evidence

Research and gathering evidence is a growing area of work and we now have over **90 evaluations** in our online Evidence Library. Published in 2015, '[A Narrative-Based Evaluation of 'Changing Tunes'](#)', authored by Jo Cursley and Shadd Maruna, found that often the positive transformation experienced by participants was a *direct* product of musical training as a medium for self-discovery and self-expression.

We have also set up a new **Arts Practice Development Group** led by the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) to focus on improving and sharing good practice in arts in prison learning and beyond. "[It provides excellent ideas for working more strategically, encouraging us to be more efficient in the sector.](#)"

Inspiring Futures is an ongoing project to bring together a consortium of arts organisations to work collectively to expand the evidence base in arts and criminal justice. We are working on this project in partnership with the [Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge](#).

Influencing policy

We sit on the **Prisoner Learning Alliance** and were delighted the new Secretary of State for Justice, Michael Gove, decided to deliver his opening speech at their event in July 2015. The Minister openly thanked "[volunteers from the arts and workers from charitable organisations who devote long hours, often for very little material reward, to help rehabilitate offenders](#)" and committed to ensuring meaningful learning and work opportunities for prisoners.

This year we have formally fed into important government consultations including the **Coates Review** into prison education and the **Taylor Review** focused on education in the youth estate. We've also made further links with the DCMS and are currently feeding into their new Cultural Strategy.

"Receiving current and relevant information through events and communications means we don't have to source it ourselves."

Online



Our Twitter followers have increased by **38%** to **1,980**



We now have **170 likes** on our Facebook page



Subscribers to our newsletter have increased by **29% in the past** year, meaning we are able to reach 2,323 people every month



We now have an average of **2,500 page views** on our website every month



We have published blogs by [Chair Alison Frater](#), [Safe Ground](#), [Revolving Doors Agency](#), the [Royal Central School of Speech and Drama](#), and [CRI](#).

Raising the profile of arts in criminal justice

The Transforming Power of Art: This year we held our first event in partnership with the National Theatre, inspired by their production of 'Our Country's Good.' With over **250 attendees** it was our biggest event yet and included live performances from Open Clasp, Clean Break and readings from Synergy Theatre Company.

National Theatre Director Rufus Norris introduced the Transforming Power of Art by recognising the importance of the arts in criminal justice.

"The Transforming Power of Art event was very useful in raising the profile and value of arts work in working with women in the Criminal Justice System."

We held our **annual Anne Peaker lecture** at the Southbank Centre, with a focus on the arts and criminal justice in an international context. Sara Lee, Artistic Director of the Irene Taylor Trust, spoke about her Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Fellowship grant that allowed her to travel to Scandinavia and the USA. In America, she said there is recognition of the value of arts in education:

"Where it worked, the arts have broken the school to prison pipeline. Young people are inspired to change."

"The Anne Peaker lecture in December was informative and stimulating and offered networking possibilities."

"I attended the Transforming Power of Art event at the National Theatre and felt it supported my work by reinvigorating me to do more, and by enabling networking."

Encouraging and promoting good practice

Our **professional mentoring scheme** aims to expand opportunities for our members to develop professional skills and knowledge in the field of arts and criminal justice through a one to one mentoring relationship. Expert mentors working in the arts and criminal justice sector work with emerging arts and criminal justice professionals to share their skills and knowledge.

In 2015, **seven mentoring partnerships** were set up to promote good practice within the sector.

"I felt that my mentor helped in all areas of my professional development – from becoming a very confident workshop leader to creating successful partnerships with organisations."

We published **three case studies** focusing on different areas of the arts in criminal justice, working with the Watts Gallery, Creativity Works and the University of Sussex. A participant of the Watts Gallery's Big Issues project said:

"The Watts Gallery art workshops saved me. I had little hope and no self-esteem when I started the workshops. This was my turning point. I have enjoyed doing this course. I've gained my confidence back and instead of self-harming I've found that now when I get depressed I can just draw instead."

Member highlights

As a membership organisation, we understand the importance of work happening on the ground. This page celebrates and promotes the great work of some of our members.

Koestler Trust arts by offenders ■ ■ ■

The Koestler Trust recruited 6 individuals with personal experience of being in prison to give daily tours to the public of their UK exhibition at London's Southbank Centre. The project was a huge success with considerable positive impact on the hosts themselves as well as on the public who benefited from their tours of the show. At the end of the project 5 of the hosts applied for jobs with Southbank Visitor Services Team and all 5 of them were successful. This is a fantastic achievement demonstrating clear employment pathways into the arts, through an immensely powerful scheme which not only provides employment opportunities, but helps the public to understand offender experiences.

"The tour was done with such sensitivity, and enabled us to develop an understanding of the effect of confinement on a human being, and the need for stimulation, education and an opportunity to give offenders a sense of self-worth" - Tour visitor



& Irene Taylor Trust Tuning In

Helix Arts and the Irene Taylor Trust have developed an arts-based training tool, 'Tuned In' that responds to the specific needs of women offenders. Funded by Northern Rock Foundation, *Tuned In* is a creative training resource, designed by women offenders from HMP Low Newton for women offenders.

"I would recommend Tuned In to others, it was a very good way of expressing myself. I was really sad when it ended. I would definitely do it again" - Participant



Irene Taylor Trust Musician in Residence

- **78% of participants** reported increased hope for the future
- **78%** reported increased motivation
- **89%** would like to continue using music as a coping mechanism

Feedback from clients from a substance misuse wing illustrates the positive impact of the project:

"It has taught me that I can try new things rather than commit crime. It has helped me to realise there are more options out there for me – that it is best to give things a go."

"This course has enhanced my vision for the future and encouraged my ambitions as a father."

Prison staff have said that the projects "have a huge impact on prisoners and staff and create an enormous amount of energy and positive feeling"; "improving attitudes, ideals, give the offenders a purpose and the experience stays with them"; "should run as frequently as possible"; and "are brilliant."



In 2015, Geese Theatre Company worked in partnership with two Birmingham-based recovery agencies, exploring the journey of addiction and

recovery. Participants worked with Geese and other collaborative artists, using film, movement and theatre to explore their own personal stories and create an original piece, which they then performed at Birmingham Repertory Theatre for invited guests, family, friends and others from the recovery community. This project was generously funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

"For me the last two weeks have been inspirational. What a fantastic company of people, to give us an opportunity to have a voice and let go of the labels... It's been great!" - Andy, Participant from Reach out Recovery, July 2015